



“International Safeguarding Summit” hosted by DfID Thursday, October 18, 2018 in London.

Take-aways from Ignacio Packer, ED ICVA

**In preparation for ICVA debriefing meeting on Thursday 24th October
4pm to 5:30pm (Geneva time).**

22ndth October 2018 – Contribution to ICVA members debriefing 24th October 2018

A strong agreement on the core of Safeguarding concerns and the need to move collectively to ensuring Safeguarding of people.

The Safeguarding Summit

Objectives of the meeting : *"to support survivors and victims, enhance accountability, incentivise cultural change, drive up standards, and strengthen organisations' capacity and capability".*

- Attended by 500 people : survivors, victims, whistle-blowers, independent experts, media, delegates from governments, United Nations, World Bank Group, international financial institutions, research organisations and NGOs.
- Not many local partners at the Summit.
- An agenda disclosed one week prior to the meeting. Morning plenary: a session to listen to victims/survivors followed by sessions for the commitments. The afternoon featured three concurrent thematic sessions (100-plus/group) where panelists covered aid sector's accountability, employment practices, and responses to victims. These sessions presented the opportunity of participants to contribute after inputs from pannelists.
- Good opportunity for networking and informal exchanges during coffee and lunch breaks.
- UN, NGO, academics, private sector and academics spokespersons presented “commitments” generally backed by actions to be taken.
- Renewed recognition that sector has fallen short in terms of safeguarding and let down the vulnerable people we work with.
- Calls for collective and individual organizations' actions for the coming months while recognizing the long term run to achieve the needed cultural changes.
- Summit was the opportunity for political positioning and leadership. Leadership by the UK government with expected continued support. The Netherlands Minister announcing – with humor - “we are number two, and close”. To note the leadership role of the UK NGOs coordinated by BOND.
- International Development Secretary, Penny Mordaunt was confronted on stage by a protester who accused her of failing to give women a voice at a conference. Penny Mordaunt apologized to Pepper De Caires (campaign group Code Blue) on stage and offered the closing slot at the summit.

Commitments

Organisations making commitments at Summit in grouped categories:

- Donors
- UK Non-Governmental Organisations
- UK Private Sector Organisations
- Research Organisations
- United Nations



- International Financial Institutions
- CDC
- Gavi and Global Fund

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/safeguarding-summit-commitments>

Commitments by 22 donors representing 90% of aid

- Since March, a group of major, like-minded donors has met regularly and presented collectively to the summit a set of commitments.
- The [donors commitments](#) to worldwide standards on the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse are endorsed (as at 17th September) by 22 governments. They represent 90 per cent of global aid.
- Four strategic shifts: 1. Support to survivors, victims and whistle-blowers, enhance accountability and transparency, strengthen reporting and tackle impunity; 2. Cultural change; 3. Minimum standards; 4. Strengthening of organisational capacity.
- Shifts backed by 22 actions for the coming months. These include stronger due diligence processes, better project monitoring, and reviewed funding agreements.
- Donors will also publish relevant information about allegations and confirmed cases and will be subject to regular independent review by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development.
- The major international donors are committed to global standards namely IASC Minimum Operating Standards and/or PSEA elements of The Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability (CHS). DfID made clear that partners who don't meet these standards will not receive UK aid funding.
- With specific interest to ICVA network priorities (in line with ICVA General Assembly March 2018 – Motion to Action¹).
 1. Support to the work of the UN' Office of the Victims' Rights Advocates and the UN Victims Support Trust Fund.
 2. Review best practice and lessons from ombudsman schemes.
 3. Demonstrate adherence to one or both sets of international minimum standards relating to preventing SEA, namely IASC Minimum Operating Standards and/or PSEA elements of The Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability (CHS). In the longer term, review and strengthen measures for verification of adherence.
 4. Explore options for a Resource and Support Center with a focus on providing support to smaller organisations.

UK NGOs commitments

Bond's members' "Our commitments to change" commitment document pulls Bond's members work together. It highlights key actions that will put the 12 sector-wide commitments into practice, signalling greater consistency and quality in safeguarding across the diverse range of NGOs (34 related actions).

Driving change in safeguarding in four areas: 1. Survivor support and enhanced accountability; 2. Cultural change; 3. Minimum standards and 4. Organisational capacity and capability.

¹ ICVA network focus for "Motion to Action" – GA March 2018 : 1. Victims rights advocacy on sexual exploitation and abuse; 2. Challenges of all ICVA members in complying to safeguarding standards; 3. Engage in dialogue with governments.



Bond is connecting with platforms to share the work UK INGOs have been doing. ICVA Secretariat to define action on which to follow and input more closely (action 23 – strengthen local civil society organisations’ safeguarding responses and capabilities). This is not a cherry-picking approach but coherent with ICVA Secretariat resources and focus given at the 2018 General Assembly.

Challenges and opportunities

The imperative of working together

There is a risk of bureaucracy and “rat racing” within the sector with so many sets of commitments from different groups.

Joining up is essential and repeated by a number of voices at the Summit.

This means:

1. NGOs (in their diversity) working together in a consistent manner.
2. Coordinating and harmonising where possible with donors, financial institutions, the UN, the private sector and universities. Minimisation of duplication.
3. In-country coordination and consideration of resources.

3 priority challenges

While the sector was very reactive following the media management of cases in the sector, ICVA positioned rapidly with a different, often complementary, discourse around multi-dimensions to the response, focus on national and local level and mitigating the negative effects.

Appreciation to hear during the Summit how these three elements are included in the commitments and interventions.

- The framing in **four dimensions for response** and not just the “technical response” (technical, cultural, root causes and political);
- **Enhancing focus on national and local level.** The building of Safeguarding measures and systems should be done together with national and local actors as well as communities concerned.
- **Mitigating negative impact** in the response to management of wrongdoing. Mitigating inappropriate impact on survivors and programme participants and inappropriate impact considering the diversity of humanitarian actors and the WHS commitments (ie. Localisation).

Pieces of the puzzle

- **The Ombudsperson** did not come up in any of the parallel session of the afternoon and the only moment it was mentioned in plenary was by the Dutch Minister. One of the 22 actions in the Donors Commitments (“6. *Review best practice and lessons from ombudsman schemes to explore the potential to improve systems of complaints mechanisms and independent accountability*”).
- £10m **global register of criminals** working in the aid sector, launched by DfID and Interpol. The scheme intends to strengthen databases and vetting systems around the world, allowing charities to access records quickly.
- UK NGOs and DfID are also to test a “**humanitarian passport**” scheme, which will vet NGO staff.
- A “**Inter-Agency Misconduct Disclosure Scheme**” will be used across the sector, with the hope of having 100 organisations signed up by December. Led by SCHR, individual ICVA members and ICVA Secretariat have committed to work in the coming months to finalise the scheme.
- The UK Charity Commission will introduce a **standard approach to criminal reporting**.



- A new **resource and support hub** will be launched bringing together the latest research, guidance and training (as part of donors' commitments).
- On investigations, a \$1 million fund, financed and managed by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), to provide **rapid grants to IASC entities to support investigations** into SEA and SHA allegations, as required is being put in place. This is on the basis that too many victims of SEA and SHA lack confidence that a reported incident will be investigated quickly or competently. Many IASC entities have already taken important steps to bolster their capacity to investigate allegations. However, several require additional resources to conduct investigations. We therefore agreed to establish

While “technology” (register, passport....) is put mainly at the service of identification and reporting, the main emphasis has to be on the recognised fact that sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment are driven by power imbalances linked to social and gender-related inequalities. A profound effort is needed to ensure systematic and lasting cultural change. We need to tackle the huge power imbalances, the sexism and the racism.

Others' takeaways following the summit

<https://www.bond.org.uk/news/2018/10/safeguarding-summit-highlights-and-takeaways-for-ngos>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/topical-events/safeguarding-summit-2018>

<https://www.charitycommissionni.org.uk/news/safeguarding-summit/>

<https://insights.careinternational.org.uk/development-blog/what-follows-today-s-safeguarding-summit-ways-forward-on-gender-and-safeguarding-in-humanitarian-action>

<https://insights.careinternational.org.uk/development-blog/metoo-one-year-on-and-seven-myths-that-stand-in-the-way-of-ending-abuse>



Next steps for ICVA

ICVA Secretariat and ICVA members have been reviewing their approach to safeguarding and improving their policies, procedures and practices. Individual action is essential to prevent sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment.

ICVA renewed its commitments to work collectively through sector-wide solutions to deliver systematic change².

ICVA Secretariat will be working out with its members the next steps on the collective action for which the ICVA Secretariat has an added value. Individually and collectively, ICVA members have to reinforce efforts to drive forward the next stage to ensure promises are translated into action.

This entails :

1. Substantial resources to be put into many Safeguarding areas;
2. Collaborative solutions led in an efficient way with a concern for people first, the diversity of the humanitarian actors and “do no harm” principle;
3. Reinforced mutual accountability with a concern on how risk is shared within the sector.

Main relevant ICVA documents on PSEA/SHW in 2018

1. [Commitment](#) and Motion to Action on PSEA and Sexual Harassment.
2. “[The Long Run to Protection Against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse](#)” – An ICVA paper sharing on the experiences of the members of the International Council of Voluntary Associations (ICVA).
3. Renewed ICVA commitments on PSEA/SHW (sent 15th October).
4. Ombudsperson Humanitarian Sector Ombudsperson’s office (HSO) - [ICVA discussion paper](#).

² ICVA General Assembly 21st March 2018 - Commitment and motion to action